

EAST-WEST ASHEVILLE PLAN ON A PAGE

Produced by the East-West Asheville Neighborhood Association

Preface

Beginning in November 2013 and continuing through February 2016, the East-West Asheville Neighborhood Association (EWANA) engaged in an extensive process resulting in the East-West Asheville Vision Plan. This Plan incorporates many of the elements of the City of Asheville's Plan on a Page format and the community input collected for the Plan provides the data needed to complete the remaining elements of the Plan on a Page. The adopted East-West Asheville Vision Plan is attached to and incorporated into this Plan on a Page document.

Neighborhood Description

East-West Asheville is the area bounded on the North, East and South by the French Broad River and on the West by I-240/I-26, with the exception of Pisgah View. The "Geography" section on pages 3-5 of the East-West Asheville Vision Plan provides a more detailed description of the East-West Asheville neighborhood.

Neighborhood History

Appendix B of the East-West Asheville Vision Plan provides a history of the East-West Asheville neighborhood. A history of EWANA's visioning process is provided in the "Background" section on pages 5-8 of the East-West Asheville Vision Plan.

Neighborhood Vision

Eight vision statements for the East-West Asheville neighborhood are presented below (and on page 1 of the East-West Asheville Vision Plan) and elaborated upon on pages 2-3. A detailed discussion of these vision statements is contained in the rest of the adopted Plan.

Vision - East-West Asheville is a highly walkable and bikable neighborhood with lots of sidewalks allowing people to walk safely through the neighborhood, with bike lanes on major streets and greenways connecting our neighborhood to parks, nature and other neighborhoods.

Vision - East-West Asheville has adequate and well-maintained infrastructure to serve the neighborhood and commercial growth from local businesses, including adequate parking, stormwater management and traffic controls, as well as the infrastructure needed to support a walkable, bikable environment.

Vision - The impacts of commercial and industrial development in and near our neighborhood are carefully managed and large trucks do not use Haywood Road as a route through our neighborhood to reach companies that are located in industrial areas or are outside East West Asheville.

Vision - The City diligently enforces laws against speeding, dumping, littering, overgrown and junked properties, graffiti, and dilapidated buildings in East-West Asheville.

Vision - Our neighborhood is not only clean and well-maintained but is also beautiful, with landscaped rights-of-way and public spaces, preserved trees and open space, community gardens and public art.

Vision – The single-family character of East-West Asheville neighborhoods is preserved.

Vision – East-West Asheville is economically and demographically diverse, with safe and vibrant streets, each displaying their unique character, with residents and local businesses that are engaged and actively supporting and contributing to our community.

Vision – Interstate highways and primary roads are designed to have minimal impact on the East-West Asheville neighborhood and promote maximum use and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Neighborhood Strengths

An exercise in the three community input gathering sessions organized by EWANA in 2015 asked participants to identify things they liked about their neighborhood. Most commonly mentioned was the neighborhood's thriving, local business district along Haywood Road. The next most mentioned were the neighborhood's walkability and bikability (especially recent bikelane additions), although the neighborhood's identification of need for improvement in these areas was clear.

Neighborhood Challenges

Very clearly, the dominant challenge facing East-West Asheville is inadequate infrastructure—expressed as both the need for more infrastructure and the need for better maintenance of existing infrastructure. Infrastructure associated with walkability and bikability was paramount—sidewalks, crosswalks, bikelanes, and greenways. Transportation infrastructure, as well as stormwater infrastructure, was also seen as a significant challenge, particularly adequate and safe parking, traffic management to reduce speeding, and fixing crumbling streets.

Concern about our neighborhood's appearance was a second major challenge identified by vision planning participants. As with infrastructure, this challenge involves a combination of pro-active concerns, such as public landscaping, tree preservation, community gardens and public art; and maintenance items—trash cleanup and dumping prevention, and codes enforcement against junked properties. Preserving and enhancing a sense of community can be seen as a third challenge facing East-West Asheville. Meeting this challenge includes promoting more community involvement, having more community events to draw neighbors together, preserving the single-family form-based character* of the residential portions of East-West Asheville, and preventing negative transportation impacts on the livability of our neighborhood, such as from using Haywood Road as a truck route or widening I-240/I-26 through West Asheville.

Neighborhood Responsibility

Most of the challenges facing East-West Asheville involve action on the part of the City. Providing and maintaining infrastructure, enforcing laws and regulations, and controlling development are all functions of local government. In these matters, our neighborhood has a responsibility to identify and prioritize specific infrastructure needs, report violations and participate in the process through which development regulations decisions are made. In other areas, our neighborhood can take responsibility for organizing clean-up efforts (EWANA has adopted the portion of Haywood Road in East-West Asheville), maintaining edible plantings in public areas, individually enhancing the appearance of our neighborhoods on our own properties, voicing our opposition to negative transportation impacts and working with the City and NCDOT to arrive at positive solutions, and organizing more community social events.

Alignment with City Council Goals

While the EWANA Vision Plan is substantially aligned with Asheville City Council goals, the certain Council goals have a higher priority for East-West Asheville. These include: the pedestrian-oriented, open space, greenway, parks, and edibles aspects of “A Well Planned and Livable Community;” the sidewalks, greenways and bike facilities components of “Transportation and Accessibility;” the vibrant local business aspect of “Thriving Local Economy;” the neighborhood advocacy element of “Connected and Engaged Community.” Having a diverse community in East-West Asheville is also something our residents value.

*This recognizes structures that could either be single-family or divided into more than one dwelling unit without changing the visual character of the neighborhood.

Alignment with Asheville City Development Plan 2025 Goals

While the 2025 Plan goals are much broader and cover a more diverse fabric than is applicable to our neighborhood, the EWANA Vision Plan aligns with the 2025 Plan goals in a number of ways. The smart growth goals adopted by City Council of: “compatible, higher density commercial and residential infill development should be encouraged” with emphasis on ‘compatible’ and “traditional neighborhood development patterns should be recognized and encouraged” are aligned with EWANA goals of preserving the existing character of residential sections of East-West Asheville and welcoming growth of local businesses along Haywood Road. The smart growth goal of “existing neighborhoods near Downtown Asheville should be strengthened through infill development, housing rehabilitation, proactive enforcement of zoning and building standards, and housing code enforcement” aligns with the EWANA goal of neighborhood beautification through City code enforcement. The EWANA Vision Plan is strongly aligned with the City Council adopted smart growth transportation policy of “make Asheville a premier walking and biking community.” This is further supported by Transportation Goal #2 “Develop a system of sidewalks, greenways and bicycle facilities that will make Asheville a more walkable and more livable city.”

The general call in EWANA’s Vision Plan for the City to improve and maintain our neighborhood’s infrastructure, including sidewalks, bikelanes, greenways, stormwater, streets, parking and traffic calming, aligns with Land Use Goal #1 of “insuring that sufficient infrastructure capacity exists or will be provided to accommodate”...” adaptive reuse, redevelopment and infill development.” The need to better maintain local streets in East-West Asheville aligns with the 2025 Plan Streets goals (in City Services) of “maintain a level of local spending on street and road maintenance that will ensure that infrastructure is maintained at the state average for pavement condition rating.”